Volunteering into the future – Adapting the sector

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This century presents us with many environmental challenges and the various types of hazardous events can impact urban, rural and remote communities in different ways. The presentation will share insights from the RMIT University and Bushfire & Natural Hazards CRC project called ‘Enabling sustainable emergency volunteering’. It is based on approximately 50 qualitative interviews from across Australia and explores the different approaches and experiences for volunteer management organisations and volunteers around disaster events. It will describe some of the ways volunteers both trained and those who come forth in response to a disaster can work together.

The research considers ideas about emergency management and the need to shift and draw upon different perspectives and involve different people to broaden approaches. As one interviewee stated, “It can’t look like it looks at the moment”. This presentation will endeavour to paint a picture of what the future might look like as we strive to adapt to the challenges of the 21st century.